

# THE NATIONAL CONFERENCE of JEWS and CHRISTIANS

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Co-Chairmen

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*This summary includes, as matters of information, certain work accomplished through the Committee on Goodwill between Jews and Christians of the Federal Council of Churches.*

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INFORMATION BULLETIN

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## THE SOCIAL SCIENCES

Understanding among men is more than a sentimental matter. Those who want to do something about goodwill between Jews and Christians need to turn more seriously to the social sciences for help than they have in the past. Whether one is dealing with inter-racial perplexities like Orient-Occident relations; or the international peace problem as the London Conference faces it; or the contrasting expressions in religion as between Jew and Christian, Catholic and Protestant, one is dealing with deep-rooted *cultural drives* and tremendous *physical and psychological forces* within every normal individual.

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### ANTHROPOLOGY

Clark Wissler in "Man and Culture" mentions three corollaries in anthropology which, we think, have pertinent bearing for those who are interested, among other phases of human relations, in those of Christians and Jews:

1. Each tribe, or true national unit, regards itself as superior to all others and holds its culture to be the best. . . . This means that all groups are to be met upon a level of assumed equality of worth.

2. There is a tendency of a group to regard its culture as synonymous with its life. There is reason to believe this to be inborn, and if so it cannot be eradicated. Those who have the responsibility of dealing with independent cultural groups should bear this in mind, for the reaction to a threat to trample upon a culture is about as inexorable as natural law. The importance of such principles lies in their value as cautions against blundering into a position that leaves the other group no recourse but to fight.

*Are not religious faiths products of cultural ensembles? If so, this corollary bears upon inter-religious adjustments as well as international.*

3. When a group attains a new solution to one of its important cultural problems it becomes zealous to spread that idea abroad and is moved to embark upon an era of conquest to force the recognition of its merits. When such international situations arise no statesman can deal intelligently with the group unless he comprehends the nature of the force that is behind it.

*Mr. Wissler illustrates this by noting that in the French Revolution the devotees of the new order flew to arms to confer their blessings upon all mankind. Might this corol-*

*lary, also, be illustrated by missionary work of religious groups as well as the enthusiasm of all other sincere reform movements?*

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### SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY

F. H. Allport in "Social Psychology" describes how most of our likes and dislikes are *conditioned responses*. Pleasant or unpleasant emotional responses aroused in our early years toward individuals and classes of people, affect our behavior long afterwards. Sentiments conditioned in us by social training determine how we shall react to the politician's reference to "orphan children" or the "rights of the people," "Liberty" and "Equality," "Bolsheviki" and "Huns." Emotions aroused by these likes and dislikes affect our physical activity, as Prof. W. B. Cannon points out, and wars, race riots, pogroms, and religious feuds are obvious examples. Our problem needs to be thought through in terms of social psychology.

What responses are Protestants *conditioning* in their children when *Jew* is mentioned?

What emotions, what sentiments, are aroused in Protestant youth by reference to *Roman Catholic*?

Similar questions might be phrased for all groups to consider.

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### SOCIOLOGY

Indeed, according to Edward C. Hayes, the sociologist insists that these *psychic processes* mentioned above are complicated by all the sciences, technologies, arts, sentiments, creeds, and evaluations that go to make up the cultural life of the Christian and the Jew, for example, as for every other group.

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### ECONOMICS

The following quotation from that interesting analysis "Middletown" by R. S. and H. M. Lind is given not to prove anything, but to suggest another strand in the social relations complex.

"Racial lines, according to old residents, were less felt in the days before the Jews had come so largely to dominate the retail life of the city, and before the incarnation of the Klan, Jewish merchants mingled freely with other business men in the smaller civic clubs, but there are no Jews in Rotary; Jews are accepted socially with just enough qualification to make them aware that they do not entirely belong."

## HISTORY

James Harvey Robinson, describing his search for the causes of the French Revolution, says that he came upon the origins of that 19th century conflict in the invention of the stone fist-hatchet in the neolithic age. Historical-mindedness is essential to any degree of understanding. Borrowed values, assimilated influences, persecutions, taboos, scruples, sacred notions dating far back—all are the real causes of the present situation of Jews and Christians today. History tells the story of how people “got that way” and the 20th century man becomes emancipated from prejudices to the degree that he understands the historical setting.

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## A HUMANIZED LITERATURE

Two men, Foster and Catchings, have spent some time now attempting to humanize—in the good sense, *popularize*—the science of economics. The task of social education in the relations of Jews and Christians calls for a humanized literature wherein the principles of the social sciences and the facts necessary for enlightenment in this field of human affairs, would be available for non-technical readers.

We are glad to announce that Dr. Clark Wissler, anthropologist in the American Museum of Natural History, will write a monograph for us.

—EVERETT R. CLINCHY.

## FIELD WORK

## COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

In the state which sent Senator Heflin to Washington there are people with mental habits varying over a wide range. February 7 and 8, at the University of Alabama the council on student activities carried through a conference of six sessions with the attendance limited by invitation to 150 students. Five Alabama Protestant ministers, three Catholic priests, three Jewish leaders, including Rabbi Jerome Mark, in addition to faculty and town people, presided or participated in the discussions. The Secretary directed the seminar and made the opening and closing addresses. Dean Dabne Lancaster was chairman for each session excepting the two round-table divisions. On February 9 the theme of the conference was carried on in some of the town churches. The nature and accomplishment of this event was so convincing that many persons on the campus are working out a plan for continuation round-tables of similar composition to cover various fields of education. Great credit goes to Father Hyland of Opelousas, La., whose brilliance, clarity, and wit added immense value and interest to the parley.

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The student president of Tulane University Y. M. C. A. is attempting a symposium on values in religion from Christian and Jewish sources. Rabbi Louis Binstock will speak for the Jews.

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The University of Arizona, at Tucson, is one of four colleges which have been asked to contribute research work to our field of human relationships. In Reed College, Oregon, a student intends to spend the next two years of work on her graduation thesis collecting data on inter-religious attitudes. Prof. Emory S. Bogardus, eminent social scientist in the University of South-

ern California, will ask two students next term to do graduate work examining the cultural factors in religious prejudices. At Leland Stanford University, with its excellent facilities and faculty for graduate research, we have found a graduate student who is equipped extraordinarily well to undertake a group study project for us.

In Berkeley the secretary met with groups of students and faculty. The University of California is considering a seminar on religious relationships. Christians and Jews joined in a campus Thanksgiving Day program last fall.

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With the lead of the Oregon University Christian Association a rabbi, a priest, and a Presbyterian minister, all Oregon men, faced a union audience and taught religion.

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The Secretary spoke twice to students in the University of Washington and three times at the University of Idaho, Southern Branch.

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A year ago we reported the interpretation of non-Protestant positions which the Christian Associations in the University of Minnesota arranged for Protestant students. This winter Hamline University, a Methodist institution in that state, started a series of college convocations covering various denomination positions with an address by Rabbi Albert Minda on *Judaism*. Soon after that the professor of religious psychology brought a group of faculty and students to Temple Israel in Minneapolis that they might have explained the symbolism and ceremonials of Jewry.

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Denver University's series of Christian-Jewish discussions last year resulted this year in a council of young people of both groups. In December more Christians than Jews (as it should be) attended the first general meeting. A Jew spoke on, “Why I, a Jew, am an American.”

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## DENVER

Dr. Carlyon, with Prof. Cherrington, Rev. George Gilmour, Father O’Ryan, Rabbi Kauvar, Dr. Friedman, members of the minister’s alliance and a number of prominent laymen, met with the Secretary of our committee in December and January as a local conference of Jews and Christians which will carry on a program extending well into the future.

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## SEATTLE

Following the series of related meetings in Seattle, Washington, January 10, 11 and 12, there has been a desire to continue a study and program of social education in this city. Among the leaders are Mr. Seamans of the Y. M. C. A., Rev. Dorothy Dyar, Rabbi Koch, and Rev. Harry Meyer.

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## PORTLAND

The 225 Christians and Jews who met as representative Oregon business and professional men in the First Presbyterian Church of Portland January 14th, held a smaller continuation meeting at luncheon the next day. Rev. E. C. Farnham, Secretary of the Portland Council of Churches, has reported that these laymen intend to hold regularly planned luncheons for systematic study and discussion over a period of two years.



## CALIFORNIA

In January the Secretary spoke in the First Congregational Church of Berkeley (radio broadcast), the Oakland Temple, and the Temple Methodist Church in San Francisco. Luncheon addresses were made to meetings in the Hotel Oakland and The Francis Drake, San Francisco. An evening dinner-seminar arranged by B'NAI B'RITH and Protestant and Catholic leaders was held January 21st. The present prospects are that out of these events shall come two significant ventures.

*Oakland:* Mr. Harry Fisher, Congregationalist; Dr. Slavish Roman Catholic; Dr. Coffee, Jew; are being asked to call occasional meetings when experts in the field of community relations in world affairs shall speak to, and reply to, questions from Oakland-Berkeley citizens.

*San Francisco:* Judge Golden, Rabbi Burstein, Father McMullen, Archbishop Hanna, Bishop Parsons, Dr. Hawkins, and Dr. Sherman—to mention some of the names—are interested in a suggestion that came from Dr. Louis Newman at the dinner January 21. The proposal is that an Institute on Human Relations, modestly limiting itself to Protestant-Catholic-Jewish relations, be formed in San Francisco as an adult educational venture. It might very well be guided, without organic connection, by the new Yale Institute of Human Relations. This would become a project of The National Conference of Jews and Christians.

*Los Angeles:* Rabbi Edgar Magnin graciously asked the Secretary to occupy his pulpit January 24th. The audience of fifteen hundred people, together with an intelligent press report, served to describe to a large number the philosophy of our program.

A seminar of three sessions and two round-table discussions was held Sunday, January 26th, in the Y. M. C. A. Protestants, Catholics, and Jews attended. Prof. Robert Taylor of the University of Southern California directed the plans. A local priest, Mr. Clinchy, and Rabbi Magnin led meetings. Rabbi Magnin succeeded remarkably well in clearly defining the real issues.

The Council of Churches in Los Angeles is decidedly cooperative in our work there.

## EL PASO

Last November Christians and Jews joined in a Union Thanksgiving meeting in El Paso. Because of his convictions one minister refused to participate because a Jew was to speak and prayer would not be offered in the name of Christ. A controversy arose and sides were taken. Misunderstandings followed. The theory of Prohibition also caused an unfortunate exchange between the local rabbi in El Paso and this minister. On February first the Secretary interviewed the rabbi and this minister. They came to luncheon later, when five other El Paso clergy dined together, and for the first time in their lives the minister in this instance and the rabbi met face to face. After lengthy discussion of the work of goodwill and understanding the minister in this story was the one to move that regular luncheons be held in El Paso so that Christians and Jews could really get to know the minds of one another.

On February 2nd goodwill and understanding between Christians and Jews were discussed in three churches in El Paso.

## NEW ORLEANS

The Association of Commerce heard the Secretary when he spoke on community relations at their meeting February 13th.

Touro Synagogue and The Napoleon Avenue Methodist Church in New Orleans joined in a public meeting and forum on goodwill, February 12th.

## DALLAS

A symposium of Protestants, Catholics, and Jews in Dallas, Texas, was held in the Little Theater Barn Monday evening, February 17th. Men from all groups took part, and the discussion was directed toward an analysis of the areas in which understanding is vague or lacking altogether. The arrangements for the meeting were made by a Dallas committee, of which Rev. G. M. Gibson was chairman.

Previous to the symposium the Secretary spoke on Sunday to the Dallas Christian Church, and later from the studio of WFAA. That afternoon he addressed The Open Forum in the Civic Auditorium, of which Mr. Elmer Scott is director. Rabbi Lefkowitz gave his pulpit to him Friday evening, February 14th.

## ST. LOUIS

May 14 and 15 are the dates for a seminar in St. Louis, which will follow the general lines of the Columbia and Harvard conferences. Dean William Scarlett, of Christ Church Cathedral (Episcopal), is chairman of an important committee including Protestants, Catholics, and Jews. Rabbi F. M. Isserman and Father J. P. Spencer are vice-chairmen.

## CHICAGO

Twenty-five men met February 10th to plan for a city conference of Christians and Jews in Chicago.

The Conference group in Chicago University met in Rabbi Solomon Goldman's home recently, when forty students heard Prof. Eustace Hayden read a paper. Herbert G. May, of the National Conference field staff has been directing this series.

## KANSAS CITY

Dr. Irvin Deer, with others in the Council of Churches, and Father J. Elliot Ross of Iowa State University School of Religion, are planning a Kansas City two-day conference to take place in the fall, Jews and Christians participating.

## NEW ENGLAND PARLEY

Smith College was host for the intercollegiate conference on "Cultural Conflicts in American Life," February 28-March 1. Prof. Frank Hankins, in the summary pointed out the difficult road ahead for the adjustments that must be made, and the competition (in the good sense) of ideas, values, and cultural patterns which must continue if we are to progress. James Waterman Wise, Prof. S. Ralph Harlow, and Everett R. Clinchy lead the round table sessions on Jewish and Gentile relations. Out of these discussions came a very important decision to effectuate changes dictated by fair-mindedness in campus and community life.

Dennis McCarthy lead the round tables on Catholic-non Catholic relations. Walter White of the N. A. A. C. P. participated in the Negro-White conflict discussions. John Herman Randall, Jr., gave the general opening address. Penelope Crane, '31, President of Smith student council, welcomed the delegates; Sylvia Cohen, '31, was chairman of the committee. The National Conference will print a digest of the proceedings, and copies will be mailed to all members.

## THE EAST

Boston, Worcester, Hanover, Hartford, Middletown, Naugatuck, New York, Mt. Vernon, Jersey City, Bayonne, Newark, Fairmount, East Orange, Trenton, Ithaca, Ellenville, Lancaster, Philadelphia, Wilmington, Baltimore, Atlanta, are among the places where the National Conference has been called to function in recent weeks.

Rural sections, and the smaller towns, are increasingly coming to the National Conference asking that work be done in their regions. Prejudice and mistrust are not confined to the larger populations, and even in those places where a relatively high degree of inter-group friendliness exists there is a desire to extend horizons, and create an intelligence regarding contrasting positions.

## NEW YORK UNIVERSITY

Members of the National Conference in and near New York may be interested in attending the symposium on "Prejudices" to be held at Washington Square April 5 and 6. The Director of the National Conference is arranging for the leadership. Sessions will be held Saturday afternoon, Saturday evening, and Sunday afternoon.

## FLORIDA

The second annual Parley of colleges in the southeast will take the form of an inquiry into trends in the modern world which are affecting human relations. Mr. Clinchy and Prof. Goodwin Watson of Columbia are arranging the course. Rollins College will entertain the Conference again. The date will be April 13-15, 1930.

## CHILD EDUCATION

A study and project course in Protestant-Catholic-Jewish relations will be published by one of the Protestant denominations this spring. This course, designed and tried out last summer by Rev. A. W. Gottschall of the First Christian Church in Baltimore, was worked out in part by The National Conference office. It will be used for children in daily vacation religious schools.

## SUNDAY SCHOOL LITERATURE

Through the Federal Council of the Churches the findings of undesirable topics, teachings, and sections in church school literature are being brought to the attention of Protestant educators, and the editors are showing a sincere desire to co-operate. Further than that, constructive teachings are being proposed which will tend to promote appreciation of Jewish culture and character.

## LAW COMMISSION

The study of discriminations in state and federal laws which the National Conference has undertaken as a 1930 project will be done by law schools, and the findings first published in one of the law journals. A more complete description of this undertaking will appear in the next Bulletin.

## BUSINESS DISCRIMINATIONS

Prof. Donald McConnell, of the department of economics in N. Y. U., is in charge of the research program of the National Conference bearing on vocational prejudice against Jews as exercised by business firms.

## CITY CONFERENCES

Throughout the nation councils of Protestants, Catholics, and Jews are agreeing to meet over long periods, and to relate themselves to the National Conference. The following general program is suggested to cities which have established committees:

### *Religious Misunderstandings*

*(A Jew, a Catholic, and a Protestant might in turn open and conduct a discussion.)*

### *Social and Cultural Factors*

*(Professional people in those social sciences referred to on page 1 of this bulletin might be invited to supply information for consideration at several council meetings.)*

### *Co-operative Work*

*(Consideration of adult educational enterprises and community projects in which Protestants, Catholics, and Jews can learn to respect and to like each other by working together for commonweal.)*

The members of the National Conference are earnestly invited to send in additional suggestions for city councils.

## EUROPE

Ever since the origins of American society European attitudes and folkways have influenced this nation. This holds true about prejudices among Protestants, Catholics, and Jews in America where the evidence of carry-over is clear. The survival of absurd accusations like the outrage of accusing Jews of using blood at Passover is one instance. Nineteenth century battles of Protestants and Catholics in Ireland still cause bitterness in Americans. The Inquisition in Spain lives on in the minds of citizens in the United States. Indeed one might go farther and notice that present-day situations radiate sharp influence one continent to another. What happens between the Christians and Jews in Poland, Hungary, Roumania, and Lithuania, taken with the complicated causes of these troubles, is quite within the purview of the National Conference of Jews and Christians. Therefore, the Conference is concerning itself with Europe. Through knowledge of the true world situation we can understand better the American problems, and in turn wise action and expression in America will have good effect on European human relations.